Romantic Poetry Questions

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| Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey  Reading Check   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **1.** | What is the speaker experiencing at the beginning of the poem (lines 1–22)? | | **2.** | What has the speaker lost since he first “came among these hills” (line 67)? | | **3.** | What does the speaker see in his “dear Sister” that makes him more aware of what he “was once”  (lines 120–121)? |   Thinking Critically   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **4.** | What do you think is meant by “the burden of the mystery” (line 38)? | | **5.** | What “gifts” (line 86) and “abundant recompense” (line 88) does the speaker believe he has received  for his “loss” (line 87)? | | **6.** | What do you think the speaker means when he says, in lines 90–91, that he has heard “the still, sad  music of humanity”? | | **7.** | What role does the speaker’s sister play in this poem? | | **8.** | What would you say is Wordsworth’s attitude toward his past, his present, and his future? | | **9.** | Wordsworth’s **blank verse** is best read aloud in the long, rolling movements of his stanzas, or verse  paragraphs.  Slowly and carefully read aloud a stanza of the poem, observing the punctuation and **run-on lines.**  Then, state whether you think the stanza you have chosen is unified by one **main** **idea.**  If so, what is that main idea? You may want to consult your reading notes. | | **10.** | Summarize and comment on the significance of the speaker’s conclusion, beginning at line 102.  Have you ever had to come to terms with losing part of your past? How did you resign yourself to the loss? |   Extending and Evaluating   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **11.** | How is this poem an example of the idea that poetry “takes its origin from emotion recollected in  tranquility”? |     The Rime of the Ancient Mariner  Reading Check   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **1.** | Use a time line to summarize the **main** **events** of the Mariner’s story. Here are the first and  final events: |  |  | | --- | | The ancient Mariner stops the Wedding Guest and begins to tell his story. | | http://my.hrw.com/la/eolit05/nsmedia/images/eolit05_12/eolit05_g12_p606.gif | | The Wedding Guest leaves sadder and wiser. |  |  | | --- | | http://my.hrw.com/images/points/1.gif |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **2.** | Who is the **narrator** of the ballad? To whom is he telling his story? | | **3.** | In Part II, what consequences result from the Mariner’s killing of the albatross? | | **4.** | In Part IV, why is the Mariner unable to pray? What happens to change this? | | **5.** | At the end of the ballad, how does the Mariner describe his current life? |   Thinking Critically   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **6.** | Describe in detail the changing mental states of the Mariner in Part IV. Given the circumstances, are these  changes believable? | | **7.** | Name three effects the Mariner’s story has on the Wedding Guest. In your opinion, does each effect seem  likely or unlikely? Explain. | | **8.** | What is the Mariner’s “penance” (lines 408–409)? Does it seem fair to you that he should have to do any sort  of penance? Why? (Refer to your Quickwrite notes for ideas.) | | **9.** | Explain in your own terms the Mariner’s **moral** (lines 612–617). Does the story indicate that he ought to have  added something to his moral conclusion? Explain. | | **10.** | This ballad is famous for its use of vivid **figurative language** and memorable sound devices. Find in the poem  a striking example of each of the following:  **simile, metaphor, personification,** **alliteration, assonance,** and **internal** **rhyme.** | | **11.** | For the most part, the form of the poem is the regular **ballad stanza.** Occasionally, however, Coleridge varies  the **meter** of the lines and the length of the stanzas. Choose one irregular stanza, and explain how it differs  from a regular one. What effects do these changes have on the poem? | | **12.** | What similarities and differences do you notice between Coleridge’s tale of the ancient Mariner and the story  described in the excerpt from Bruce Chatwin’s *In Patagonia*? (See the ***Connection***on page 788.) | | **13.** | Compare the Mariner’s experiences to those of Coleridge as described in his letter to Joseph Cottle. (See the  ***Primary Source***on page 787.) What is the source of each man’s guilt? What other states of mind or body do the  two men share? What similar actions do they take? | | **14.** | Sometimes the archaic meaning of a word gives us a clue to the history of a word in current use. Look at the use  of the word *jargoning* in line 362, for example. What does the word *jargon* mean today? What other examples of  archaic words that are still in use today can you find? You might want to consult your reading notes. | | **15.** | There was a time in American history when almost every schoolchild could recite parts of *The Rime of the*  *Ancient* *Mariner*. Find some stanzas that strike you as particularly quotable.  What situations in contemporary life could you apply the lines to? |   Extending and Evaluating   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **16.** | What do you think of Coleridge’s sidenotes to the poem? Do you think reading them alters the meaning of the poem? Should they be consulted in a careful reading of the poem? Explain why or why not. | |  |

Kubla Khan

Thinking Critically

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| **1.** | In the first stanza, what **images** create pictures of the pleasure-dome that Kubla Khan decrees? |
| **2.** | Why is the “deep romantic chasm” of line 12 called a “savage” place? What ominous note is introduced toward  the end of the second stanza? |
| **3.** | In the third stanza, what does the speaker see in a vision? What does the speaker say he wants to do? |
| **4.** | The speaker in the poem has been interpreted as being an artist, perhaps a poet. Why would the “damsel  with a dulcimer” be important to the speaker? |
| **5.** | What could the “dome in air” which the speaker wants to create **symbolize**? |
| **6.** | Many ancient cultures regarded poets as seers who had a special relationship with the gods and thus were  to be treated with reverence. How might Coleridge be alluding to such beliefs in the closing lines of the last stanza? |
| **7.** | How could this poem be about the creation of a poem? |
| **8.** | Describe the **rhyme scheme** and **meter** of the poem. What examples of **alliteration** add to the poem’s music? |

To a Mousehttp://my.hrw.com/la/eolit05/nsmedia/icons/diamond.gifTo a Louse

Thinking Critically

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| **1.** | How does the speaker’s **tone** change in line 37 of “To a Mouse”? What does the speaker imply in the last stanza about his own past and his prospects for the future? |
| **2.** | In stanza 2 of “To a Mouse,” what do the words *dominion* and *union* mean? What Romantic attitude toward people and nature does the use of these words imply? |
| **3.** | What comparison between the mouse and himself does the speaker make in the last two stanzas of “To a Mouse”? |
| **4.** | What is the speaker’s **tone** in “To a Louse”? How does it differ from the speaker’s tone in “To a Mouse”? |
| **5.** | What is Burns’s underlying **theme** in “To a Louse”? Is his main focus the louse or the lady? Explain. |
| **6.** | Using details from the poems, respond to **Connecting to the Focus Question** on page 840. |

Extending and Evaluating

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| **7.** | Burns differs from most eighteenth-century poets in his use of **dialect.** What dialects are used in drama, songs, films, and fiction today? How do you feel about the use of dialect to convey realism? Cite specific examples. |